California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Ana Region

March 2, 2001

ITEM: 17

SUBJECT: Executive Officer's Report

DISCUSSION:

1. **Winter Storms Impact Dairies of the Region -** The dairies within the Santa Ana Region are starting to show the effects of this season's winter storms. The Chino area has received approximately 9 inches of rain for the season. Normal rainfall is about 16 inches (13 inches during the winter). The storm of February 11 through 13, 2001 delivered approximately 4.6 inches over the 48-hour storm period. In comparison to the past several years, the dairy operators generally were better prepared this year for the seasonal wet weather. Containment system capacity for several dairy facilities in the Chino Basin area, however, was exceeded during this last storm. Many other facilities are approaching their containment capacity. These capacity limitations, and the high intensity, short duration storms that have occurred, have necessitated Board staff investigations of several discharge incidents. Board staff will recommend enforcement action, including administrative civil liability complaints, for several of the discharge incidents.

   As I have reported to the Board in the past, management of dairy wash water and runoff contaminated by manure continues to be a challenging water quality problem faced by dairy facilities within the Chino and San Jacinto areas of the Region. Many dairies in the Chino Basin are impacted by runoff, originating in the upstream urban areas north of Riverside Drive, that flows into the dairy preserve. Due of the lack of flood control infrastructure south of Riverside Drive, this excess runoff enters several dairy facilities, causing a failure of wastewater and runoff containment systems, which results in dairy wastewater discharges. This combination of excess runoff and dairy wastewater then flows through downstream dairies in the path of the excess runoff. Last year, the County of San Bernardino Flood Control District installed a stormwater collection system along a portion of Riverside Drive. This has helped alleviate some of the offsite flooding problems experienced in a portion of the dairy area. However, additional collection systems, currently scheduled for completion within the next three to five years, will be necessary to address additional portions of the dairy area.

   In accordance with Cease and Desist Order (CDO) No. 99-65, adopted by the Board on August 20, 1999, the Region's dairies are in the process of developing

and implementing Engineered Waste Management Plans (EWMPs) for their facilities. These EWMPs are intended to provide the dairies with an acceptable level of protection to prevent wastewater and runoff leaving the dairy property. The CDO established an implementation schedule so that all the Region's dairies will have an EWMP by the end of 2002. Progress to get the EWMPs developed and constructed has been slower than anticipated, however, primarily due to the limited consulting civil engineering firms willing to undertake this type of work. Board staff is striving to review the draft EWMPs that were due last year as quickly as possible so that the revised EWMPs can be accepted and implemented prior to next winter. The major facility modifications that will be necessary for the dairies to comply with their waste discharge requirements will be implemented in accordance with the accepted EWMPs.

2. **Settlement with Standard Pacific Homes -** On October 27, 2000, I issued Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) Complaint No. 00-94 against Standard Pacific Homes for alleged violations of the State's General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity. Standard Pacific is a developer currently conducting construction as part of The Irvine Company's Crystal Cove project. Standard Pacific is alleged to have discharged approximately 6,000 gallons of street wash water containing pollutants, including uncured mortar, to the storm drain system and ultimately to the Pacific Ocean at Crystal Cove State Beach. The proposed assessment was $10,350.00. On December 22, 2000, Standard Pacific proposed a supplemental environmental project (SEP) for $5,000 and agreed to pay the remaining amount ($5,350). For the SEP, Standard Pacific has agreed to contribute $5,000.00 to the Orange County Chapter of the Building Industry Association to defray the cost of at least two training seminars to train its members in storm water regulations applicable to construction activities. In an effort to increase outreach activities and improve compliance at construction sites, I accepted this proposal. Board staff will actively participate in the training seminars.

3. **Proposals for Expansions of Electrical Generating Facilities -** California's electrical emergency has led Governor Davis to issue a number of Executive Orders to address the current electrical shortage. One of these orders directs agencies with permitting authority over new or expanded electrical power generating plants to expedite the permit process. Staff of Cal/EPA, the SWRCB and the Regional Boards, including the Santa Ana Region, have been asked to provide current information on the status of permits for proposed, expanding or retooling electrical power generation facilities, as a gauge to assess potential permitting delays. If delays occur in developing and adopting waste discharge requirements and NPDES permits for these facilities, it could prolong the current emergency. Another Executive Order directs the SWRCB to ensure that existing power plants are not precluded from operating as a result of thermal limits in waste discharge requirements.

The Santa Ana Region is home to three large, and one small, steam electric power plants. Two of the large plants (in Huntington Beach and Redlands) and the small one (in Highgrove) have waste discharge requirements. One of the large plants (the Etiwanda station, in Fontana) discharges to the non-reclaimable waste line operated by Inland Empire Utilities Agency, and is not directly regulated by the Regional Board. The Redlands and Huntington Beach facilities have applications pending before the California Energy Commission (CEC) for increased production.

Board staff is aware of a number of smaller electrical generation facilities in the Region, as well. Several of the Region's largest wastewater treatment plants, and at least one correctional facility and one university campus, operate co-generation facilities that produce steam, hot water and/or low-pressure air, as well as electricity. The City of Anaheim operates a gas turbine generator to provide peak demand electrical power.

The Redlands station, owned by Mountainview Power Co., a subsidiary of ThermoEcotek, Inc., has a licensing application nearing approval by the CEC, for a major expansion. Currently, the plant can produce 130 megawatts, with two steam turbine electric generators, using natural gas-fired, conventional boilers for steam. The expansion will add four gas turbine (essentially a jet engine) electric generators and boost the plant's capacity to 1056 megawatts, as well as recover heat that can be used to operate the older generators. Construction is already underway, and the new capacity is scheduled to be available in March 2002.

The expanded Mountainview Power station is being designed as a "no direct off-site discharge" facility, and requires minimal regulation by the Regional Board. Process wastes will either be discharged to the Santa Ana Regional Interceptor brine line, for eventual treatment and discharge by Orange County Sanitation District, or hauled to an appropriate treatment facility. Storm water will be retained on site. The station will use recycled water provided by the City of Redlands, and the Regional Board and the City of Redlands will regulate this use. The facility currently has a NPDES permit adopted by the Board, so this expansion will not require any further permitting action by the Board.

The Huntington Beach plant, owned by AES Huntington Beach, LLC, a subsidiary of The AES Corp., has a CEC application pending for retooling and modernization of the two smaller of its four steam turbine electric generators. The AES Huntington Beach plant also has a gas turbine generator unit, used for providing peak demand power. This generator also has "black start" capabilities, to provide power necessary to restart the main steam generators in the event of a major failure of the power grid. These two smaller steam units, which have not operated since 1995, will produce 450 megawatts and are scheduled to go into service by mid-2001. The plant's current NPDES permit allows for discharges with all four of its steam generator units operating, so this increase in production would not require a new permit or revision of the current permit.

No other proposals or reports of waste discharge for electrical power generation facilities have come to Board staff's attention. Regional Board staff has contacted the two Cal/EPA Permit Assistance Centers in the Region to ask about any serious inquiries they may have received about siting new electrical power generating facilities in the area. They report none. This contrasts sharply with Regions 2 and 4, where a number of new and expanded plants have been proposed and are being considered by the CEC. Some, if not all, of these proposals will eventually require action by those Regional Boards.

3. **OCSD Outfall Investigation -** The Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD) has begun an investigation of its outfall, and the surrounding ocean, to determine whether its wastewater plume is reaching the shore and causing high levels of bacteria in the surf zone. The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether the wastewater plume from OCSD, which is discharged approximately 5 miles offshore, is causing or contributing to beach closures in Huntington Beach. Following the beach closures in Huntington Beach in the summer of 1999, several professors from the University of California at Irvine (UCI) evaluated all the monitoring data collected by OCSD and the Orange County Health Care Agency to determine if the data identified the cause of the beach closures. During the summer of 1999, urban runoff was suspected as the likely cause of the beach closures, but the evidence was not conclusive. A UCI professor has hypothesized that the wastewater plume from the OCSD outfall may be entrained in the discharge of warm water from the AES Huntington Beach power plant, which is approximately 1600 feet offshore, and reach the surf zone.

   OCSD has put together a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of experts to evaluate a proposed investigation plan that includes monitoring of ocean currents, sewage effluent tracers, and bacteria, and is designed to determine if the wastewater plume is reaching the shore zone. This TAC includes members from UCI, the US Geological Survey, the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, the Orange County Health Care Agency and Public Facilities and Resources Department, several local environmental groups, consultants to OCSD, Regional Board staff, and other interested parties. (Mark Adelson, Chief of our Surveillance and Enforcement Unit, Ken Theisen, our Beach Initiatives Coordinator, and I participate in all TAC meetings.) The TAC has met to review and comment on OCSD's proposed investigation plan and will eventually evaluate the results of the investigation. OCSD plans to begin the investigation in June, and complete the first year's monitoring in October.

4. **Clean Beaches Initiative -** The Governor's proposed budget for 2001-02 includes $100 million for his proposed Clean Beaches Initiative. The goals of the initiative are to reduce beach closures in California by 20% by the end of the summer in 2002, and to reduce beach closures by 75% by 2008. The SWRCB's Beach Water Quality Workgroup has taken the lead in implementing the Clean Beaches Initiative. This workgroup is comprised of SWRCB staff, county health department staff and Regional Board staff from the coastal counties and regions

of the State, and other interested parties. The workgroup has been meeting to work together to solve beach closure problems over the past several years and will be expanded to implement the initiative. The initiative proposes to use $70 million for "brick and mortar" type projects that will reduce beach closures, $20 million for wetland projects to treat urban runoff and reduce beach closures, and $10 million for a number of technical assistance projects designed to help solve many problems related to beach closures (such as the development of rapid detection methods to assist the health departments in determining whether a beach should be closed or conducting sanitary surveys to determine the causes of beach closures). Staff is working with the workgroup to identify projects that can be implemented to reduce beach closures in the Region, and to participate in the technical assistance projects.

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Executive Officer